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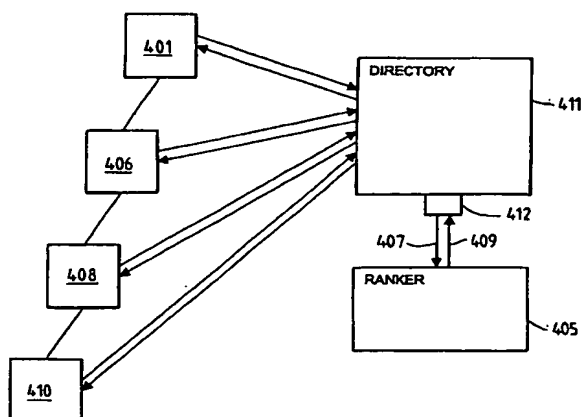
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(54) Title: **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR RANKING SERVICES IN A WEB SERVICES ARCHITECTURE**



(57) Abstract: A method for ranking services in a web services architecture and a web services architecture are provided. The web services architecture has a hierarchy of services (401, 406, 408, 410) with a root originating service requestor (401) and a service of a first level in the hierarchy calling a service of a lower level. The originating service requestor (401) indicates a preference regarding one or more services and a ranking machine (405) provides a choice algorithm based on the preference. The originating service requestor (401) invokes services of one or more levels of hierarchy. At each level of the hierarchy (401, 406, 408, 410), a service uses a directory (411) to find a set of possible lower-level services and the ranking machine (405) applies the choice algorithm to the set of possible lower-level services. In one embodiment, the set of possible lower-level services is referred to the ranking machine (405) from the directory (411) and a preferred sequence is returned by the ranking machine (405) to the directory (411).

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